

OUTGOING MESSAGE

Approved For Release 2002/01/14 : CIA-RDP78S01932A000100020052-9

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CLASSIFICATION

CONFIDENTIAL

CIA/OCI/WH#Z 740221

MESSAGE HANDLING INDICATOR

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MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

CIA/WHSS

SOURCE REF:

25X1A

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TO: IMMEDIATE WHITE HOUSE//SITUATION ROOM FOR MR MCNAMIS,
STATE RCI//OPERATIONS CENTER MR FRY, NMCC//ATTENTION

WARNING NOTICE SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS
INVOLVED

ITEM NO: 3 25X1A

DATE: 21 FEB 74

SUBJECT: UNSEASONABLE WEATHER THREATENS SOVIET GRAIN CROP

REF: [REDACTED]

A FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE ON IZVESTIA YESTERDAY IMPLIES THAT MELTING
SNOW, FLOODING, AND ICE CRUSTS THREATEN THIS YEAR'S SOVIET WINTER
GRAIN CROP. ALTHOUGH CLAMORING NO SPECIAL GROUNDS FOR ALARM
AND CONCERN," THE ARTICLE ORDERED FARMERS TO DRAIN FLOODED FIELDS
IMMEDIATELY AND PREPARE FOR THE POSSIBILITY THAT SEVERE FROSTS
COULD KILL CROPS DEPRIVED OF PROTECTIVE SNOW COVER.

UNSEASONABLE AND CHANGEABLE WEATHER HAS ALREADY LEFT THE CROP
VULNERABLE. AN UNUSUALLY RAINY AUTUMN DELAYED SOME SOWING LAST
YEAR, AND AN EARLY COLD SPELL SLOWED THE DEVELOPMENT AND REDUCED
THE HARDINESS OF THE GRAIN IN MOST OF THE EUROPEAN USSR. A THAW

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IN LATE DECEMBER FOLLOWED BY A SUDDEN COLD SPELL IN MID-JANUARY
DAMAGED SOWINGS IN THE NORTHEASTERN UKRAINE, THE CENTRAL BLACK
EARTH REGION, AND THE LOWER VOLGA. THE SNOW COVER NEEDED TO
INSULATE THE PLANTS FROM KILLING AIR TEMPERATURES WAS THIN OR
ABSENT OVER MOST OF THE AREA THROUGH JANUARY. NOW, ABOVE-NORMAL
TEMPERATURES FOR FEBRUARY HAVE COMPLETELY MELTED THE SNOW IN KEY
AREAS. STANDING WATER AND ICE CRUSTS CAN SUFFOCATE SEEDLINGS
IN SOME PLACES. MORE THREATENING TO ALL REGIONS, HOWEVER, IS
THE WARM WEATHER WHICH REDUCES PLANT RESISTANCE TO EXTREME COLD,
STILL LIKELY TO OCCUR.

ALTHOUGH THE WINTER GRAIN AREA LOST TO WINTERKILL COULD
EXCEED THE LONG-RUN AVERAGE OF 20 PERCENT, A LARGE PLANTING LAST
FALL AND THE RESEEDING OF DAMAGED AREAS WITH SPRING GRAIN COULD
STILL PRODUCE A NORMAL OR ABOVE-NORMAL ¹ 1974 GRAIN CROP. RESEEDING
IS CENTERED ON FEED GRAINS, HOWEVER, SO THAT THE BREADGRAIN
HARVEST COULD FALL BELOW LAST YEAR'S LEVEL. E-2 IMPDET.

SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION: E EUR AND [REDACTED]

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